2009 Admissions Committee Report

There were 799 new students enrolled at UNLV in 2009 who were admitted under alternative criteria. They were admitted through either select objective criteria established by the Admissions Committee and consistent with Board of Regent guidelines, or through extensive review and discussion by committee members in one or more of 15 meetings (five of which were conducted via email). Select objective criteria were identified by the committee in order to increase its efficiency after the Board of Regents decided to more than double the target number of alternate admits (AAs) enrolled in the universities. Boards of Regents’ guidelines for alternative criteria include the following:

a) A combination of test scores and grade point average that indicate potential for success
b) Special talents and/or abilities such as, but not limited to, the visual or performing arts or athletic abilities
c) Other evidence of potential for success
d) Improvement in the high school record
e) Overcoming adversity or special hardship
f) Other special circumstances.

Alternate admits were more diverse than the UNLV student population, with the following ethnicity percentages among the fall 2009 AA cohort:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>39.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>20.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>17.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>11.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi Race</td>
<td>4.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaiian/Pacific</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown/Did Not Disclose</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Resident Alien</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to reviewing applications, the committee discussed and made recommendations or implemented measures it thought would improve the process of recruiting, selecting, and supporting alternate admits.

1) The committee suggested changes in Faculty Senate bylaws

   [http://facultysenate.unlv.edu/common_files/Fs_Bylaws_2009.doc](http://facultysenate.unlv.edu/common_files/Fs_Bylaws_2009.doc) regarding its composition which were adopted by the Senate.

2) It established, revised, and implemented some committee policies (subject to veto by the Faculty Senate).

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1 Report prepared by Admissions Committee Chair Clint Richards. The Chair would like to thank Tanya Al-Talib, Levent Atici, Terri Bernstein, Carol Conder, Adrienne Ekas, Wendy Hoskins, David Jackson, Audrey McCool, Roy Ogawa, Michael Pravica, Wendell Staszek, Cheryl Tillotson, David Weiller, Joel Wisner, Nancy York, and Jessica Zimmerman for their contributions to the committee. The Chair would also like to recognize Terri Bernstein, Adrienne Ekas, David Jackson, Audrey McCool, Michael Pravica, and Joel Wisner for their outstanding service over multiple terms.
3) It examined information from a requested report by Enrollment and Student Services which showed high retention rates for fall 2008 AAs admitted by full review of committee and by the various select criteria, and decided to continue use in fall 2009 of the following:
   a) Applicant has completed high school and is fully admissible (BOR) per HS record with 6 or fewer college credits less than a 2.5 GPA
   b) Applicant has earned at least a 2.3 on 24 or more transferable college credits & at least a 2.5 GPA for the most recent semester
   c) Applicant has minimum core requirements and a 1040 SAT or 22 ACT
   d) Applicant has at least a 2.5 overall GPA & a 400 Verbal SAT or 17 English ACT
   e) Applicant is registered with a CAEO program and applies with a 2.5 Core GPA in the minimum Core i.e., has at least 10 Core credits at a 2.5 at the time of application.
   f) Applicant meets Board of Regents’ required GPA for universities but is deficient 1/2 to 1 core credit

However, a requested re-examination of spring 2009 retention data in the late fall of 2009 by Institutional Analysis and Planning indicated the original retention analysis was inaccurate and that actual retention rates of 2008 cohorts by AA category could not be determined because of coding problems. After determining that the appropriate coding changes had been made, the committee requested Institutional Analysis and Planning to do a grade and retention analysis of Fall 2009 admits by AA category and compare to regular admits.

4) The committee discussed ways of providing advisors with the information we get about alternate admits as a way of improving retention rates and grades.

5) It discussed the possible use of the new UNLV Admissions online Insight Resume (patterned after a similar one used at Oregon State University). The committee will keep abreast of developments in this new UNLV program, and expects to have access in the future to the Insight Resumes of applicants.

6) The committee addressed the question of how to make information more accessible to prospective applicants who don’t meet the automatic alternate criteria without discouraging those who do.

7) It recommended changes to the UNLV Admissions website regarding admission alternatives (http://www.unlv.edu/admissions/alternatives.html) and the appeals application form (http://www.unlv.edu/admissions/pdf/2009_UNLV_AppealsApplication.pdf) which were designed with 6) above in mind, or were required in order to implement policy revisions.

Policy Additions, Clarifications, or Revisions
a) The committee approved three new automatic (select) AA categories:
   1. Applicants who have completed high school and are fully admissible (BOR) by test score but have 6 or fewer college credits less than a 2.5 GPA.
   2. Applicants who have completed high school, are admissible by any one of the select AA freshman high school criteria, and have earned at least 1 but less than 24 transferable college credits with an overall transfer GPA of at least 2.5.
   3. Applicants who have an undergraduate degree from an NSHE institution with less than a 2.5 transfer GPA.

b) If an applicant is admitted by the Admissions Committee for one semester and does not attend that semester, he/she will be admitted for a future semester as long as the student has not taken/completed additional courses and admission standards have not changed in the interim. Otherwise, the student will have to go through committee again.
c) A student who is denied by the committee may not reapply for the same semester. However, the student may update his or her file for the next semester and go through committee again, preferably with a new personal statement and additional course work.

d) The committee decided that it would not attempt to recommend applicants for or to specific programs within colleges (e.g., ILP Program), and that it will notify accepted AAs that they need to contact their college concerning requirements for admission to programs within that college.

e) The committee approved a new policy that generally requires transfer students (students with more than 24 credits) to provide test scores but allows them to apply for a waiver by explaining in their personal statement why the test is not needed and/or would impose an undue hardship to them.

f) The committee removed the special probationary status of alternate admits which previously resulted in immediate suspension of alternate admits who failed to make a 2.0 in 6 or more hours their first semester. Alternate admits are now under the same probationary and suspension regulations as regular admits.

Descriptions of the 15 Admissions Committee meetings in 2009 follow.

**January 7 and January 13 Email Meetings**

Adrienne Ekas, Audrey McCool, Joel Wisner, Michael Pravica, Terri Bernstein, David Jackson, Nancy York, and Wendy Hoskins emailed their votes and comments on the last-minute applicants after an email discussion of them.

**February 27 Meeting**

Meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm. with Jessica Hyam, Cheryl Tillotson, Wendy Hoskins, Nancy York, Joel Wisner, Michael Pravica, Terri Bernstein, Carol Conder, Jason Linders (for David Jackson), and Clint Richards present. Audrey McCool, Adrienne Ekas, and David Weiller submitted their input on the applications via email.

1. The meeting began with the introduction of guest Luke David Schultheis, Executive Director of Admissions & Recruitment, and new committee member Carol Conder.
2. Committee members were next given some information regarding the most recent Faculty Senate meeting.
   a) The Provost complimented the committee on its work, noting that students admitted by the committee itself (not automatic criteria) were retained at a higher rate than other admits according to a report by Angelina Hill, Ph.D., Director of Assessment and Policy Analysis for Enrollment and Student Services.
   b) The following motion to revise Faculty Senate bylaws on the composition of the Admissions Committee passed:

   The Admissions Committee recommends the following deletions (crossed out) and additions (in bold) from 5.1 of the Faculty Senate bylaws

   Admissions
   1    Academic faculty from each undergraduate degree granting college and school
   3    Undergraduate students
1. Dean, University College or designee (ex-officio, non-voting)
2. Director, Academic Enrichment & Outreach or designee (ex-officio, non-voting)
3. Director, Undergraduate Recruitment or designee (ex-officio, non-voting)
4. Dean, Academic Success Center or designee (ex-officio, non-voting)
5. Director, Student Athlete Academic Services or designee (ex-officio, non-voting)

3. Committee members reviewed and discussed Admissions new appeals documents and noted that the documents not only closely follow our previous recommendations but add to and improve upon them.

4. After discussion, the committee approved the following:
   a) Eng 101E will be accepted as part of the required load for alternate admits if the committee is provided the student’s first semester grade. That grade will then be included in calculating the student’s GPA.
   b) The committee approved three new automatic AA categories:
      1. Applicants who have completed high school and are fully admissible (BOR) by test score but have 6 or fewer college credits less than a 2.5.
      2. Applicants who have completed high school, are admissible by any one of the select AA freshman high school criteria, and have earned at least 1 but less than 24 transferable college credits with an overall transfer GPA of at least 2.5.
      3. Applicants who have an undergraduate degree from an NSHE institution with less than a 2.5 transfer GPA.
   c) New AA admits will continue to enter on probation and thus must earn 6 UNLV credits or more at a 2.0 cumulative GPA the first semester in order to maintain their admission status. The committee believes that mandatory advising should assure that AA students are fully aware of this probationary status.
   d) If an AA admit does not meet the 2.0 cumulative GPA requirement or does not earn 6 credits, then the student may appeal. The student will need to prepare a personal statement explaining the circumstances of the GPA or credit deficiencies and the committee will need to see the transcript from the first semester. These documents are to be given to the Admissions Committee Liaison.
   e) If a student is admitted by the Admissions Committee for one semester and does not attend that semester, he/she will be admitted for a future semester as long as the student has not taken/completed additional courses and admission standards have not changed in the interim. Otherwise, the student will have to go through committee again.
   f) A student who is denied by the committee may not reapply to the committee for the same semester. However, the student may update his or her file for the next semester and go through committee again, preferably with a new personal statement and additional course work.

5. The committee reviewed and voted on applications, scheduled the next meeting for March 20 at 1:00 pm, and adjourned at 3:00 pm.

March 20 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm, with Jessica Hyam, Wendell Staszkow, Joel Wisner, Michael Pravica, Terri Bernstein, Carol Conder, David Jackson, and Clint Richards present. Audrey McCool, Adrienne Ekas, David Weiller, and Nancy York submitted their input on the applications via email.
The committee reviewed a report prepared by Admissions of spring 2009 AA retention rates by alternate admit category and noted that students in all but one had a retention rate of over 90%. One automatic category of alternate admits (those registered with a CAEO program and a 2.5 GPA in the minimum Core) had a retention rate of only 81%, but there were only 21 students in that group. The committee decided to continue with all the automatic alternate admit categories it previously approved until more data is available on the category with the lower retention rate.

The committee discussed and voted on applications, set the next meeting for April 24, at 1:00 pm., and adjourned at 2:15 pm.

April 24 Meeting

The meeting was called to order in BEH 318 at 1:00 pm. Present were Carol Conder, Jason Linders (for David Jackson), Adrienne Ekas, Joel Wisner, Wendy Hoskins, Wendell Staszkow, Jessica Hyam, Michael Pravica, Cheryl Tillotson, and Clint Richards. Terri Bernstein, David Weiller, and Nancy York emailed comments and votes on the applications.

The first order of business was discussion of a meeting on 4/23 regarding the use of non cognitive factors in admissions at Oregon State University. The committee chair passed out information that had been distributed at that meeting, and reviewed its contents and the presentation made at the 4/23 meeting by the Director of Admissions at Oregon State. The committee discussed possible use of a similar system. Two major differences between the Oregon State situation and the UNLV situation were noted:

1) The system at Oregon State was used for all students, not just alternative admissions students. However, it appears unlikely that it would be used for all students here at UNLV.

2) The students at Oregon State selected by the Admissions Committee and through the regular process had unsatisfactorily low diversity and retention rates. In contrast, the report received by the committee last month found students selected for fall 2008 admission by full committee review had higher retention rates and exhibited greater diversity than other new freshman admits for fall 2008.

Committee members also noted that the committee already considered non cognitive factors consistent with guidelines provided by the Board of Regents. However, these factors were considered separately, or additively, as the committee considered appropriate, while the Oregon State method dictates use of an additive model with scores limited in range on each factor.

The committee decided to invite Suzanne Espinoza and Luke Schultheis to our next meeting to discuss the Oregon State system and answer questions about it.

New applications were discussed and voted upon, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm after scheduling the May meeting for the 22nd at 1:00 pm.

May 22 Meeting
The meeting was called to order in FDH 218 at 1:00 pm. Present were Terri Bernstein, Carol Conder, Adrienne Ekas, Wendy Hoskins, Jessica Hyam, David Jackson, Michael Pravica, Wendell Staszkow, Luke David Schultheis, Cheryl Tillotson, Joel Wisner, Nancy York, and Clint Richards. Audrey McCool emailed her comments and votes on the applications.

The meeting began with an invited presentation by Luke Schultheis, Executive Director of Admissions & Recruitment, on university plans regarding use of the Insight Resume currently used in admissions at Oregon State University. Luke informed the committee that the Insight Resume questions used at OSU would be part of the UNLV online application form and would be scored in a manner similar to the process used at OSU. The purpose is to study its predictive capabilities and possible applications to advising and other activities designed to enhance students’ success. The Admissions Committee could also be given access to the results of review of Insight Resume answers from prospective students applying to the committee. Admissions and Recruitment will be presenting its plans regarding use of the Insight Resume to the Faculty Senate in the fall. The committee agreed to discuss this topic at further length in the fall.

New applications were discussed and voted upon, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm after scheduling the June meeting for the 26th at 1:00 pm.

June 26 Meeting

The meeting was called to order in BEH 318 at 1:00 pm. Present were Terri Bernstein, Wendy Hoskins, Rory Ogawa, Michael Pravica, Clint Richards, Luke Schultheis, Wendell Staszkow, Cheryl Tillotson, and Joel Wisner. Adrienne Ekas emailed her comments and votes on the applications.

Luke Schultheis attended in order to request that the committee consider treating alternate admits the same as other new admits by giving them two semesters to make a 2.0 GPA before suspension. The committee discussed the proposal and agreed to continue consideration at its next meeting. Luke also told the committee that AAs will have coaches who they will have to see on a regular basis, probably every week. There will be one coach per 80 AAs.

The committee next discussed new information on AA retention rates from the Office of Institutional Research and Planning which shows much lower figures than those provided to the committee previously. The information broke down information by two categories only: committee-based and “select” (objective criteria based categories lumped together). The chair agreed to speak with Kari about getting information broken down by the different select automatic criteria used.

The committee spent considerable time discussing what it can do, other than increasing our selectivity, to improve retention rates. One idea was to provide the information we have to AA’s “coaches” or advisers. Wendell and Jessica will check on the feasibility of doing this.

The committee next discussed and voted upon the applicants. During that discussion, the issue of transfers without test scores came up. We recently made the test scores optional but
recommended for transfer student applicants. It appears most are not taking the tests and this loss of information is causing uncertainty with respect to a number of them.

**July 24 Meeting**

The meeting was called to order in FDH 218 at 1:00 pm. Present were Terri Bernstein, Carol Conder, Adrienne Ekas, David Jackson, Wendell Staszkow, Cheryl Tillotson, Joel Wisner, and Clint Richards. Audrey McCool emailed her comments and votes on the applications.

Wendell Staszkow provided a report on the students admitted by committee who met the NCAA sliding scale. The 2008 fall admits had only a 2.3 GPA, but those admitted in the spring compiled a 2.9. The retention rate was 75%. The committee decided to continue to admit these applicants without full review and will continue to monitor them as groups along with other groups admitted under the automatic alternate admit criteria chosen by the committee and those applicants admitted by full committee review.

The committee reviewed and voted on applications, set the next meeting time for August 21 at 1:00 pm, and adjourned at 2:30 pm.

**July 27 Email Meeting**

Adrienne Ekas, Audrey McCool, Joel Wisner, Michael Pravica, Terri Bernstein, Wendy Hoskins, Nancy York, and David Jackson emailed their votes and comments on the last-minute applicants after an email discussion of them.

**August 21 Meeting**

The meeting was called to order in FDH 218 at 1:00 pm. Present were Clint Richards, Jessica Zimmerman, Wendell Staszkow, Terri Bernstein, Wendy Hoskins, Cheryl Tillotson, and David Jackson. Adrienne Ekas, Joel Wisner, and Audrey McCool emailed their comments and votes on the applications.

The committee discussed the need for email voting next week, and agreed to a deadline of Thursday. Jessica agreed to send out the applications she already had immediately, and send others as soon as she could.

The committee also discussed the possible need to develop a proxy policy to lessen the danger of not achieving a quorum for a summer meeting or special email meeting, and agreed to take this up in the fall when we have fewer applicants and more members present.

The committee reviewed applications, and adjourned at 2:15 pm after setting the next regular meeting time for September 24 at 1:00 pm.

**August 26 Email Meeting**
Adrienne Ekas, Audrey McCool, Joel Wisner, Michael Pravica, Terri Bernstein, and Wendy Hoskins emailed their votes and comments on the last-minute applicants after an email discussion of them.

**October 23 Meeting**

The meeting was called to order in BEH 318 at 1:00 pm. Present were Tanya Al-Talib, Terri Bernstein, Wendy Hoskins, Roy Ogawa, Michael Pravica, Luke Schultheis, Wendell Staszkow, Cheryl Tillotson, Joel Wisner, Jessica Zimmerman, and Clint Richards. Adrienne Ekas emailed her comments and votes on the applications.

Luke Schultheis, Executive Director of Admissions & Recruitment, notified the committee that the one academic success coach per 80 alternate admits will probably meet with their charges every week or two, and again asked the committee to consider going to a two-semester rather than one-semester probation for alternate admits. The committee discussed this and decided to return to it next meeting.

The committee discussed the possibility of providing advisors with the information we get about alternate admits as a way of improving their retention rates and grades. Wendall and Jessica agreed to check further into this possibility and report back next meeting.

The committee also discussed ILP Programs, and Wendy Hoskins said she would look into this issue more and get back with us next meeting.

The committee next discussed and voted on the applicants. During that discussion, the topic of evaluating transfer students who did not provide test scores came up, and the committee discussed whether its decision to make tests optional for transfer students was a good idea. It appears most aren't taking the tests despite the recommendation that they do.

The committee set the next meeting for November 20 at 1:00 pm and adjourned at 2:30 pm.

**November 20 Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm. Present were Adrienne Ekas, Roy Obawa, David Jackson, Jessica Zimmerman, Cheryl Tillotson, Joel Wisner, and Clint Richards. Terri Bernstein, Wendy Hoskins, David Weiller, Tanya Al-Talib, and Audrey McCool emailed their votes to the committee.

1. The committee approved minutes of July 24, August 21, August 26, and October 23 meetings.
2. The committee voted to remove the one semester probation condition of AAs until the next meeting when we will consider removing the special probationary status of AAs and thereby deferring to the colleges and programs regarding student probation conditions (as is the case with regular admits). Many of the committee members expressed the opinion that it appeared unfair to apply more stringent probation standards on alternate admits than on regular admits. On the other hand, it was pointed out that alternate admits are about 12.5% less likely than regular admits to be successful (2.0 or greater) their first semester.
3. Jessica agreed to check into the feasibility of providing the information we get about alternate admits to advisors to hopefully improve their retention rates and grades.

4. The committee decided that it should continue to examine the qualifications of applicants for admission to the university only, that it would not attempt to recommend applicants for or to specific programs within colleges (e.g., ILP Program), and that it will notify accepted AAs that they need to contact their college concerning requirements for admission to programs within that college.

5. The committee again discussed the issue of requiring test scores for transfer student applicants and noted that the recommendation we have made to these transfer students to take the SAT or ACT was frequently not followed, or results were frequently not reported to the committee. The chair agreed to draft a stronger recommendation for the committee’s review that would suggest applicants would have to apply for a waiver and provide reasons for it in their application if they decide not to take and report one of the tests.

6. The chair reported on conversations with the Assistant Vice Provost of Institutional Analysis and Planning regarding our need for AA success information by category as well as other information which might enhance our predictions about applicants’ success. The chair has been added to a Retention Advisory Group as a result of these conversations, will meet further with the Assistant Vice Provost and report back to the committee on progress.

7. The committee next reviewed and voted upon this month’s applicants.

8. The committee set the next meeting for December 11 at 1:00 pm in the Faculty Senate Conference Room, FDH 218.

9. The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 pm.

December 11 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. Jessica Zimmerman, Wendell Staszkow, Cheryl Tillotson, Wendy Hoskins, Michael Pravica, Levent Atici, Roy Ogawa, Adrienne Ekas, and Clint Richards were present. Audrey McCool emailed her votes.

Discussion of Retention Analysis Update

The committee discussed the new report from Assistant Vice Provost Kari Coburn of which shows that the retention analysis of alternate admits by category that we had requested from Enrollment Management and reported to the Faculty Senate in the spring of 2009 was inaccurate. Unfortunately, the new analysis was unable to determine actual retention by AA category because the coding that was done long after admission appeared to be of questionable accuracy.

It now appears that alternate admits have about a 12.5% lower success rate (2.0 or higher) than regular admits, and that this difference has been pretty steady as the number of alternate admits has grown. The committee chair noted that as early as March 28, 2008 committee members expressed concern about continuing to allow students to be admitted by our automatic criteria when students were not coded by these admission criteria on admittance. The chair expressed this concern to Enrollment Management at the time, and was assured that coding could accurately be done at the end of the semester along with the analysis of success rates. However, this doesn’t appear to have been the case.

Jessica and Wendell confirmed that Admissions is now coding alternate admits by category as they are admitted. The chair said he will talk with Kari about preparing a report on success of
fall 2009 AAs early in the spring semester. He will also ask Admissions for numbers admitted by category and for information on diversity by category and compared to regular admits.

Probationary Status of Newly Admitted Alternate Admits

The committee also discussed the vote last meeting to drop the probationary status of newly admitted AAs in order to put them on the same footing as regular admits. The committee noted that the probationary status of alternate admits upon enrollment may have served a function in the past by providing a cautionary message to those students. However, members expressed the opinion that this was no longer necessary given the mandatory advisors and academic success coaches to be assigned to alternate admits in the future.

The committee also noted that elimination of the probationary status of AAs removes the need for a policy approved last spring before the committee was notified of the planned mandatory advising. That policy stated: “If an alternate admit does not meet the 2.0 cumulative GPA requirements or does not earn 6 credits, then the student may appeal. The student will need to prepare a personal statement explaining the circumstances of the GPA or credit deficiencies and provide the committee with a transcript of their first semester. These documents are to be given to the Admissions Committee Liaison.” The committee did not specify whether the change would be retroactive, or how students would be notified if retroactive. It did request that Admissions appropriately modify the Alternate Criteria Process document available to applicants and email it to members for review. Jessica agreed to do this.

Test Requirements

Last year, the committee decided that students with 24 or more transferable credits would not be required to take the SAT or ACT, but that the description of the alternate criteria process available to prospective applicants would recommend that these students take one of the tests. The policy was implemented, and has resulted in very few with 24 or more transferable credits submitting a test score. The committee approved a new policy that generally requires transfer students (students with more than 24 credits) to provide test scores but allows them to apply for a waiver by explaining in their personal statement why the test is not needed and/or would impose an undue hardship to them. The committee requested that Admissions appropriately modify the Alternate Criteria Process document and Appeals Application Form and email the modified versions to members for review.

Future Meetings

Jessica told the committee there would be a need for two email meetings in late December and early January, suggested dates for receipt of applicants and submission of votes, and said she would send a follow-up email later today.

The committee discussed and voted on applications, and adjourned the meeting at 2:55 pm.

December 31 Email Meeting

Adrienne Ekas, Audrey McCool, Joel Wisner, Terri Bernstein, Tanya Al-Talib, Levent Atici, Roy Ogawa, and Wendy Hoskins emailed their votes and comments on the last-minute applicants after email discussion of them.